

TRACES OF JEWISH LIFE IN LADENBURG



A Tour

Jürgen Zieher

Published by the
City of Ladenburg

2nd EDITION

LOBDENGAU³ MUSEUM LADENBURG

Archeology and History in the Bischofshof Ladenburg



The Lobdengau-Museum is located in the former second official residence of the Bishops of Worms. Along with archeological finds from the Roman city of Lopodunum, it houses numerous testimonies from all historical periods reflecting the significant past of the city. The history of the Jewish Community is also part of that.



Lobdengau-Museum; City of Ladenburg

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Admission

Individual
Reduced rate
Family ticket
Children to age 6
Guided tour

€ 3.50
€ 2.00
€ 7.00
Cost-free
€ 25.00 + admission fee

Opening hours

Wednesday 3-6 pm
Saturday 2-5 pm
Sunday 11 am-5 pm



TO “STUMBLE,” PAUSE
AND REFLECT . . .

It is very positive and important that the booklet *Traces of Jewish Life in Ladenburg* has here been republished. Many citizens and interested persons not only obtained a copy of the first printing, but it was and continues to be widely used in the schools as well. In recent years, memorial plaques and commemorative Stolpersteine, literally ‘stumbling stones’ – small brass plaques installed in sidewalks dedicated to the memory of a Jew who once lived at that place – have been placed in remembrance of the Jewish residents of Ladenburg who were deported or in many cases murdered during the Holocaust. Unfortunately, today we can only pause to remember the long history over many centuries of the Jews of Ladenburg, which came to an end with the deportation of the last 27 Jews from the town on October 22, 1940 to Gurs in France and their later murder in Auschwitz.

However, Jewish life is again vibrant and thriving in the Rhine-Neckar region, and I wish here only to point to three important institutions in Heidelberg: our very active Jewish Community with its wonderful synagogue, the College of Jewish Studies (Hochschule für jüdische Studien) and the Central Archive for Research on the History of the Jews in Germany.

Yet despite such positive developments we must nonetheless remain vigilant. I am very shocked by the increase in anti-Semitism. I would have never thought that the word ‘Jew’ could once more become a term of abuse and opprobrium in the schoolyard or on the football pitch. It is inconceivable how anti-Semitism is now spreading openly in social networking.

It is thus all the more important to know that we Jews in the region, in Baden-Wuerttemberg and in Germany, are not alone. Let us endeavor, in joining hands together, to do our very utmost in order to defend, secure and preserve our democracy and shared values. ●

Rami Suliman
Director, Jewish Religious Community Baden,
(K.d.ö.R / body in public law), autumn 2019



A TOUR THROUGH THE JEWISH HISTORY OF LADENBURG

The city of Ladenburg is a small town, like many localities across Germany. Until October 22, 1940 the Jewish Community here was also a part of the municipal society. Its history ended on that day with the deportation of the last Jewish residents of Ladenburg. What has remained until today are questions, the desire to come to terms with the past, and the heartfelt wish for reconciliation.

On the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the "Night of Crystal Pogrom," three very impressive commemorative events were held in November 2018 extending over three days in our city. Central in those events was the visit to Ladenburg of the contemporary witness Ruth Steinfeld, who as a child in Ladenburg had herself suffered deportation. In her moving description of her martyrdom speaking to pupils of the Carl Benz Secondary School, the suffering inflicted upon her and the atrocities of the Nazi dictatorship became powerfully perceptible. She concluded her talk with a fervent appeal: "I am telling you this story so that you can act to make sure that this can never again occur – never again!" These words and the very warm encounter with her will likely be long remembered by all those in attendance.

The visit of Ruth Steinfeld, the commemorative events, and the special exhibition "Neighbors 1938" staged in the Lobdengau Museum in cooperation with students from the College of Jewish Studies in Heidelberg and Heidelberg University are the most recent contributions to a growing culture of memory focused on the Jewish history of Ladenburg – a culture of memory whose point of departure was the mounting in 1976 of the memorial plaque at the location of the former synagogue on Hauptstraße. This was followed in the years thereafter by a multitude of further activities, such as the placement of the sculpture of a Torah near to Market Square, visits to the Jewish Cemetery, the opening of a Jewish Section in the Lobdengau Museum and the installation of more than 37 commemorative "stumbling stones" in the municipal pavement by the artist Gunter Demning. All these are visible proof and lasting testimonies against forgetting. Not publicly visible, but nonetheless equally as valuable were and are the vibrant contacts and encounters with former Jewish residents. We owe a special debt of gratitude to the "Working Group Jewish History" that these contacts have been maintained up to the present.

The need to emphasize the historical responsibility vis-à-vis German history has now become particularly important, provoked by the rise of populism and nationalism nowadays – not directly in Ladenburg, yet in many other localities across Germany. Given the most recent attacks on Jewish shops and Jewish fellow citizens, Federal President Frank Walter Steinmeier has stressed that “anti-Semitism is an assault on us all in an open society.” The decision to publish a second edition of this booklet should thus be seen as a contribution to education and commitment for an open society. The traces of Jewish life in our city are omnipresent and must never be forgotten. This informative booklet can be recommended in particular to pupils at school as an important source for grappling with their own history and the past events that transpired in Ladenburg and elsewhere.

The present second printing owes its implementation to many individuals. First, I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Jürgen Zieher for his meticulous work in treating this thematic focus on the traces of Jewish history in Ladenburg and his readily comprehensible presentation. I would also like to thank Ms. Ingrid Wagner for her untiring dedication in seeking to ensure that Ladenburg should sense and preserve a lasting obligation to recollection of its Jewish past. The translation has kindly been undertaken by William Templer. Finally, I also will to extend my great thanks and appreciation to the Ladenburg chemical firm BK Giulini GmbH, a fully-owned subsidiary of the ICL Group, through whose generous contribution the printing of this booklet guide was brought to fruition. ●

*Stefan Schmutz,
Mayor of Ladenburg, autumn 2019*

SEARCHING FOR TRACES

A Jewish Community existed in Ladenburg from the 13th century until 1940, whose members for centuries had contributed in multifarious ways to the development of the city. In the Middle Ages, the Community was twice destroyed or its members expelled from Ladenburg. During the third persecution under the National Socialist dictatorship, the previously thriving Israelitische Gemeinde Ladenburg (the official designation of the Jewish Community in the 19th and 20th century), which ranked among the most respected smaller rural Jewish Communities in Baden, was finally destroyed in but a few short years by means of the discrimination, deportation and murder of its members. As in most localities in Germany, no members of the Jewish religious Community returned to stay and settle down in Ladenburg. Nonetheless, the traces of former Jewish life can still be found in a multitude of forms today in the town, as the tour described below makes clear. The sixteen stopping points or 'stations' of the tour principally involve the biographies of former Jewish residents. For purposes of a better understanding, a short overview of the history of Jewish life in Ladenburg is initially provided. The designations "Jewish Community" ('jüdische Gemeinde') and "Israelitic Community" ('israelitische Gemeinde') are used synonymously in the German text. The following information is based on the publications listed at the end of the booklet. Detailed references have not been given in the text so as to enhance overall readability.

It is possible that already in the Roman period (98–260 A.D.) individual Jews were living at that time in Lopodunum. However, the first documented mention of Jews in Ladenburg stems from the year 1291. A Jew called "Moyses von Luttenburgk" is named as a witness in a sales contract between the Knights of Strahlenberg and the Count Palatines. On the basis of the existing sources, it cannot be determined whether a Jewish Community already existed in Ladenburg at the end of the 13th century. However, based on the documented mention of a Jew in the city as a contractual witness, the Jewish Community in Ladenburg is counted among the oldest such communities in Baden. At the latest at the beginning of the 14th century, such a community was present. In 1315 the knight Rennewart von Strahlenberg prevailed in a dispute with the Worms Bishop Emerich in Ladenburg regarding the so-called Judenregal. The Judenregal was the right

of the imperial estates to grant protection to Jews in return for monetary payments. All Jews throughout Germany had in 1236 become imperial chamber servants under Emperor Frederick the Second; they were obliged in return for their special protection by the Reich to pay certain levies. In view of the many taxes and levies imposed on Jews in the medieval period, they only had actual access to a small portion of their income. In the 14th century, Jews were not only subjected to economic and social discrimination but were also murdered in repeatedly occurring pogroms.

The plague spread in Europe in 1348/49, an epidemic that for millions in Europe ended in death. The population put the blame for this deadly disease on the Jews. They claimed the Jews had poisoned the wells and thus caused the scourge of the "Black Death." The consequence of these accusations led in 1349 to the eradication of numerous Jewish Communities in Germany, including also that in Ladenburg.

After the murder of the Jewish Ladenburgers, an interim of some three decades ensued before Jews settled once again in 1380 here in the town. Those newly arriving Jews comprised four families which had presumably fled from Speyer and Worms. Elector Ruprecht I. of the Palatinate (1353–1390) had granted entry into in his land to the refugees. The attitude of the sovereign toward the Jews in his sphere of control differed substantially during the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Era from one incumbent to another. Accordingly, the fate of the Jews was always changeable. From the 14th to 17th century, times marked by persecutions of the Jews predominated over periods of time in which the Jews were tolerated. That was also the case for the Jewish Community in Ladenburg. Shortly after assuming office, Elector Ruprecht II. (1390–1398) expelled the Jews in 1391 from the Electoral Palatinate, confiscating their possessions. Thus, after 1349, for a second time a Jewish Community ceased to exist in Ladenburg. A document from the year 1391 evidences that the house belonging to a Ladenburg Jew and the "Judenschul" (synagogue) located on the same property was sold by the Elector to a non-Jewish resident in the city. The "Judenschul" mentioned was the first synagogue of the Jewish Community in Ladenburg, located at Metzgergasse No. 5.

After the banishment of the Ladenburg Jews in 1391, Jews did not settle again in the city until the rule of Elector Palatine Charles Louis (1649–



Metzgergasse No. 5, location of the first synagogue of the Jewish Community Ladenburg, ca 1390. Photo in the 1960s.

1680). At the end of the 17th and beginning of the 18th century, several houses in the historical center of Ladenburg were owned by Jews, among them also the Renaissance house at Kirchenstraße No. 45. That building housed the second synagogue of the Jewish Community, which was in regular use from the late 17th century until the end of 1832.

In the 18th century, the individual states in Germany issued Regulations for Jews, so-called "Judenordnungen" that regulated the legal situation of the Jews residing respectively in their territory. These Regulations set out inter alia the separation of the Jews from the Christian population, the trades Jews were permitted to engage in and the amount of the levies they were required to pay. During this period, the greater majority of Jews in Ladenburg were engaged in the cattle and grain trades, also as dealers in second-hand goods and in finance.

The best-known Jewish resident of the city in the 18th century was Moses Herschl, the progenitor of the Ladenburg family. His son Chaim (Hajum) Moses Hirsch Ladenburg (1710-1781) moved to Mannheim, was later active at the Electoral Court and became superintendent of the Jewish Community of Mannheim. Moses Herschl's grandson, Wolf Chaim (Hajum) Ladenburg, founded the Ladenburg Bank in Mannheim in 1785. He was very active in Mannheim in charitable activities for the Jewish Community there and was elected as a member into the Supreme Council of the Baden Israelites.

The number of Jewish residents in Ladenburg fluctuated substantially in the 18th century. In 1722 there were eight Jewish families living in the city, in 1743 that number had risen to 26 families, and in 1757 had declined to only 14 families – that was the maximum number of Jewish families that had been stipulated by the sovereign. Underlying this restriction was the intention to accept only a small number of preferably wealthy Jews,

prepared to pay high taxes, into the city. If such individuals later lost their wealth, such Jews, regarded as mere sources of added revenue, were then expelled from the territory of the sovereign.

The Electoral Palatinate was dissolved by the Principal Decree of the Imperial Deputation in 1803. Its territories on the right bank of the Rhine, including Ladenburg, were largely transferred to the later Grand Duchy of Baden. The Supreme Council of Baden Israelites was created in 1809 by an edict decreed by the Grand Duke Charles Frederick. In 1827, this regional association established a new classification of the Jewish Communities in Baden. With the exception of the Community in Mannheim, the previously existing local synagogues were supplanted by synagogue districts that coincided with the rabbinate districts. A total of 15 rabbinate districts were formed in Baden, also including Ladenburg. The Ladenburg District Rabbinate encompassed, along with the Community in Ladenburg, the Jewish Communities in Feudenheim, Ilvesheim and Schriesheim, as well as in Dossenheim and Seckenheim, until the latter two were later dissolved. However, in Ladenburg itself there probably was at no time a rabbi in formal office and tenure. Rather, the affairs of the Ladenburg District Rabbinate were overseen by a rabbi from Mannheim or Heidelberg in personal union. Religious supervision of the Ladenburg Community was handled in the 19th and 20th century by a cantor (chazzan), who initially served simultaneously as a teacher at the Jewish school (ca. 1835 to 1868) and later as a religious teacher and ritual slaughterer (shochet). In 1875, the Supreme Council of Baden Israelites did away with the District Rabbinate in Ladenburg, ordering the inclusion of its member local Communities within the Heidelberg District Rabbinate.

In the 19th century, the number of Jewish residents in Ladenburg initially continued to increase. In 1825, the Jewish Community counted 93 members and ranked among the medium-sized Communities in the area of today's Rhine-Neckar District (Rhein-Neckar-Kreis). In 1853, around mid-century, the number of members peaked at 139. At that point nearly five percent of the population of Ladenburg was of the Jewish faith. From that juncture on, the Jewish Community was in continuous decline in membership, even as the number of residents in Ladenburg continued to rise. In the period 1861–1864 a total of 125 Jews were living in Ladenburg, but by 1875 only 99 persons were registered with the Community as Jews. The short-term increase in Community members to 105 in the year 1900 was probably due *inter alia* to the arrival of migrant East European Jews

in the town. Due to the pogroms in Eastern Europe around the turn of the century, many Jews had emigrated to Germany. In 1910, four years before the outbreak of World War One, the membership in the Jewish Community Ladenburg had once more declined slightly to 96 persons.

During the 19th and early 20th century, Jews in Ladenburg were predominantly engaged as independent merchants, preferably active in the textiles and tobacco trades. Only very few Community members practiced a craft trade at this time. This was due to the sustained impact of a centuries-old prohibition on Jews belonging to a craft guild. It was not until 1862 that the Baden state parliament ruled that Jews in Baden had full equality under the law. Like their coreligionists in other areas of the German Reich, many Jews in Ladenburg probably felt that they were first and foremost Germans, and only then secondarily Jews. In keeping with this pronounced sense of national patriotism, Jewish males considered it their duty to participate in the Franco-German War and in World War One. The merchant Theodor Hauser, born 1889 in Ladenburg, was the first soldier from Ladenburg killed in action in August 1914 in combat in France. The Community member Arthur Kaufmann, born 1893 in Ladenburg, fell in battle in February 1915.

In the German Empire, as a result of the diverse religious and cultural engagement of its members, the Jewish Community Ladenburg earned a good name for itself among their coreligionists in the surrounding localities. In the view of Sally Rosenfelder, the cantor and teacher David Freitag – one of Rosenfelder's predecessors who had been active in Ladenburg from ca. 1868 to 1907 – had contributed in particular to this high regard in which the Ladenburg Jewish Community was held. Rosenfelder's merit was that through his multifaceted engagement since 1910, he had helped to enhance the prestige of Jewish Community life in Ladenburg. In retrospect he characterized the Community as a "model Community in the model mini-state." This recognition of the Ladenburg Jewish Community was not limited to Baden Jewry and its internal relations. Rather it was also manifest during the Weimar Republic in Jewish relations with the non-Jewish Ladenburgers as well – that is substantiated by reports in the local press dealing with Community activities and individual Community members. The differences in the religious practices of individual families notwithstanding, predominant among the Jewish Ladenburgers was a sense of mutual tolerance and togetherness, so that there were probably few points of friction or tension between Orthodox and Liberal Communi-

ty members.

As the Weimar Republic came to an end, Ladenburg could boast the presence of a vital Jewish Community, one whose demographic structure and internal constitution allowed for an optimistic view of the future. Nonetheless, Com-



Jewish Community excursion in the 1930s

munity members were increasingly concerned about ongoing political developments in Germany, in particular the rise of the NSDAP to become the strongest political force in the country.

At the beginning of the National Socialist dictatorship in January 1933, there were 88 Jews among Ladenburg's 5,111 inhabitants. Despite the upturn in the official anti-Semitic propaganda since the spring of 1933, Sally Rosenfelder, the longtime cantor of the Ladenburg Community, felt that the relation between the Jews and non-Jews in the city, even during the first years of National Socialist totalitarian rule, was "extremely good." The cantor could not recall any violent assaults against Jews during the 1930s before November 1938. However, the government-prescribed animosity toward Jews, in Ladenburg and across the country, did not remain without consequences for the relations between Jews and the non-Jewish surrounding society. Evidently present among the members of the local NSDAP branch, established at the end of 1929 in Ladenburg, were several extremely ardent National Socialists and staunch anti-Semites. They were impatient, unable to wait to the end of March for the official scheduled beginning of the one-day boycott of Jewish businesses on Saturday, April 1, 1933. Instead, already on Wednesday, March 29, 1933, they forced the closing in Ladenburg of Jewish-owned enterprises. Several Jewish-owned shops in Ladenburg were regularly closed on Saturday, the Sabbath, in any case. The official boycott on April 1 thus had a direct impact only on the remaining Jewish-owned shops that customarily were open on Saturdays. On the morning of April 1, SA and SS members in uniform were standing once again out in front of Jewish firms. It was hardly possible to speak of a

"sudden" popular boycott that had emerged (according to the Nazi propaganda), given the events engineered by the SA and SS that had transpired on March 29. Rather, in Ladenburg as elsewhere across the German Reich, this was an anti-Semitic measure that had been staged by the Nazi Party.

As in other municipalities across Germany, the discrimination and exclusion of the Jewish population in Ladenburg only became possible due to a combination of several different factors. The National Socialist policy which had made anti-Semitism into an official state doctrine formed the encompassing framework. In Ladenburg as elsewhere, in the ranks of the "party comrades" this was compounded by their own motives for persecuting Jews. The permanent anti-Jewish propaganda resounding on the radio and in the press served to engender a sense of indifference amongst broad circles in the population in regard to the fate of the Jews. Only a minority of the non-Jewish Germans preserved a moral sense of civil courage and stood by their fellow citizens who were Jews. The tacit consent among portions of the population for the anti-Jewish measures and an extensive passivity made it possible for a comparatively small group of staunch anti-Semites to exclude Jews, to persecute them, strip them of their livelihoods and finally, to murder them en masse.

In view of the rising tide of anti-Semitism, from 1933 on a sense of solidarity strengthened among the members of the Ladenburg Jewish Community. This was manifested, for example, in more frequent attendance by Liberal-minded members of the congregation in religious services at the synagogue. The Community continued to arrange its respected festivals for Purim and Chanukkah; however, they no longer took place every year on a grand scale. Such festivities were organized for the last time in 1937. Some Jewish families in Ladenburg could no longer discern prospects of any real future for their children after 1933. For that reason, they urged them to emigrate. In parallel, other Community members moved elsewhere inside Germany and some later emigrated from there abroad. In an ever shrinking Jewish Community, the proportion of older Community members continually rose. However, representatives of the parental generation itself wished to stay on in their German homeland, to which – despite all the discriminatory actions – they still felt as in the past a powerful inner bond. The Jewish Ladenburgers continued to celebrate regular religious services right down to the November 1938 pogrom. On November 10, 1938, SA and SS men ravaged, ransacked and destroyed the interior of the Ladenburg synagogue as well as furnishings in the private

Jewish residences. Eleven Jewish males were seized and deported to the Dachau concentration camp.

The demolition by explosives or destruction by arson of the synagogue planned by the SA and SS was not carried out, solely because of vocal protests by residents in nearby buildings: they feared massive damage to their own homes if the synagogue was set ablaze or blown up. In anxiety as a result of these events, another 18 members of the Jewish Community emigrated from Ladenburg from early 1939 until the outbreak of World War Two on September 1 that year. Most of those emigrants were adolescents and young adults; their parents chose to remain on in the city. For some Community members, a decisive factor in persuading them to stay on in Germany was *inter alia* very material: the absence of the necessary financial or administrative prerequisites for emigration. After the war erupted, emigration became nearly impossible; nonetheless, between February and August 1940, four further Jewish men from Ladenburg succeeded in fleeing from Germany. The remaining 27 Jewish men, women and children in Ladenburg were transported on October 22, 1940 to the southwestern French internment camp Gurs. On that day, under orders by Gauleiter Robert Wagner and Josef Bürckel, the National Socialists rounded up a total of 6,500 Jews in Baden and the Saar Palatinate. Their intention, in anticipatory obedience – a corresponding decree from Berlin for this operation had not been issued – was to render their two Gau districts “Jew-free” (‘judenrein’) as the very first in the Reich.

On that fateful October day in 1940, the Jewish Community Ladenburg ceased forever more to exist. Not a single member of that Community lost his or her life in Ladenburg itself; in the main, the Jewish Ladenburg victims of the Holocaust met their death in France or Poland. However, their persecution had begun specifically in the city in which, in part for many decades, they had felt was their home and believed they were Ladenburgers. After the end of the Nazi dictatorship and the Holocaust – in Ladenburg as in all small towns across Germany – there was no re-foundation of a Jewish religious Community. Not a single former member of the Ladenburg Jewish Community returned to stay permanently in Germany. The city suffered a painful and irreparable loss as a result of the final destruction of its Jewish Community.

For a long time, the fates of the former Jewish citizens were blanked out of public consciousness. The desire of many Germans to repress the mass murder of the European Jews and their own role in National Social-

lism remained for decades powerful and predominant.

Given the zeitgeist of that era, it also came to pass in Ladenburg that in 1967 the last remainders of the synagogue were removed. It was not until November 1976 that the Ladenburg Municipal Council decided to install a memorial plaque at the location of the former synagogue on Hauptstraße in remembrance of its former Jewish citizens. This was done at the initiative of the then mayor Reinhold Schulz. In June 1990, 14 former Jewish Ladenburgers were invited as guests to visit Ladenburg. For a number of them this constituted their first reunion with their former town for 50 years. This gesture of reconciliation and numerous encounters during their one-week stay left a lasting impression on all those involved. As a result of this visit as well as later visits and encounters, the difficult and hesitant process of rapprochement by individual members of the Jewish Community with their former home town experienced a fundamental transformative change.

The members of the "Working Group Jewish History" (Arbeitskreis Jüdische Geschichte), founded in Ladenburg in 1983, also contributed with



Visit by
former
citizens
in Ladenburg
June 1990.

its numerous activities to this process. It is owing to them, for example, that it became possible to document the history of the former Jewish Community and to publish it in 1992 for the first time: Die jüdischen La-

denburger, a voluminous volume of 324 pages.

At the initiative of the Working Group and thanks to donations from the residents of Ladenburg, it proved possible in May 1995, 50 years after the end of World War Two, to dedicate a memorial stone at the Jewish Cemetery bearing the names of the Ladenburg Jews persecuted and murdered by the National Socialists.

In the period from May 2007 until March 2009 in Ladenburg, at the initiative of Ingrid Wagner and with the help of donations from the population and the support of the municipal administration, a total of 37 "stumbling blocks," commemorative bronze plaques, were installed in the pavement around the city. The "Stolpersteine" – a project started in 1995 by the Cologne-based artist Gunter Demnig – remind people of the fates of former Jewish citizens persecuted and in the main murdered by the National Socialists. As a rule, the stones are placed as plaques embedded even with the ground in the sidewalk outside the last freely chosen place of residence of a person before deportation. The term 'Stolperstein' in German traditionally means 'stumbling block,' and Gunter Demnig has used that designation metaphorically.

In March 2008 in the municipal Lobdengau Museum in Ladenburg – in the presence of the former Jewish Community members Lea Weems, née Krell and her sister Ruth Steinfeld, née Krell – a Jewish Section was opened



Lea Weems, née Krell, thanks Gunter Demnig in March 2008 on the occasion of the placement of "stumbling blocks" in front of her former residence on Weinheimer Straße No. 20; visible; behind her is her sister Ruth Steinfeld, née Krell.

for the Jewish history of Ladenburg. The visitor can gain valuable insights into the former Jewish life in the city through the multifaceted exhibits on

On the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the November 1938 "Night of Crystal" Pogrom, a working group of students at the College of Jewish Studies in Heidelberg and at Heidelberg University, under the direction of Prof. Dr. Johannes Heil and Dr. Amélie Sagasser, conceived and implemented an exhibition with the title *Nachbarn 1938 – „Wir waren alle Ladenburger“*. Based on the fates of selected Jewish families, it vividly showed

the togetherness and close bonds of solidarity between Jews and non-Jews in Ladenburg before and during the National Socialist dictatorship. The exhibition in the Lobdengau Museum was opened on November 10, 2018 in the presence of Ruth Steinfeld; it enjoyed a strong popular resonance among the Ladenburg population.

Already in November 1989, there had been a first 'walk through history' in Ladenburg featuring

places associated with earlier Jewish life. Since then several hundred persons have taken part in the guided tours headed by Ingrid Wagner and/or Dr. Jürgen Zieher. In years past, various participants have repeatedly expressed their wish to be able to go looking for traces of former Jewish life themselves, assisted by a small guide booklet in hand. The City of Ladenburg has acted on this suggestion by arranging the writing and publication of the present booklet. By means of this well-researched booklet, the Municipality and author wish to recall the fate of the Jewish Ladenburgers



Poster announcing the exhibition "Neighbors 1938 – "We were all Ladenburgers," November 2018 to July 2019 in the Lobdengau Museum.

and at the same time also remember their contributions to Ladenburg's urban history. May this booklet serve to promote tolerance and respect between the members of different faiths and cultures, prevent the forgetting of those inexcusable events and be a core element in a lasting cry of admonition: 'Never again!'

The present publication owes its realization to numerous individuals and institutions. I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to Ms. Ingrid Wagner for her initiative in connection with this booklet, and to the former Ladenburg Mayor Rainer Ziegler and his coworker Ms. Brigitte Stahl for their great dedication in implementing the first edition of the booklet guide published in 2011. I also wish to extend my sincere thanks to Mayor Stefan Schmutz for his active and engaged support in realizing the publication of the second revised and expanded edition, and now for this translated edition in English prepared by William Templer, a translator well-known in the field of German-Jewish history and culture.

Gunter Demnig noted during one of his visits in Ladenburg: "A human being is only forgotten if their name is forgotten." In this sense, let me cordially invite you to seek out and discover the traces of Jewish life in Ladenburg. In the following tour, with its total of 16 stations, are vibrant traces of Jewish life and references pointing to the human fates of Jewish Ladenburgers. ●

*Dr. Jürgen Zieher,
Heidelberg, autumn 2019 / autumn 2020*

DEPORTATION ON 22. OKTOBER 1940 | Market Square

Our tour commences at Ladenburg Market Square. On the morning of October 22, 1940, police officers and SS men ordered the last remaining 27 Jewish men, women and children in Ladenburg to gather together their belongings within just 20 minutes and then assemble at the Market Square. This order came as a total surprise for these persons affected, so that some in haste took along too little clothing as they rushed to the Market Square assembly point. Trucks stood waiting at the Market Square which then transported these persons – the youngest but 1 year old, the eldest aged 85 – under armed guard to Mannheim. At the Mannheim central train station, the Jewish Ladenburgers were ordered together with the other persons to be deported and commanded to board the waiting railroad passenger coaches. The train then transported these Jews southwestward on a trip of several days to the southern French internment camp Gurs at the foot of the Pyrenees. Due to the catastrophic living conditions prevailing in the Gurs camp,

numerous internees perished during the winter 1940/41, in particular the more elderly. On November 29, 1940, the furniture left behind in the Jewish homes was publicly sold by the City Court of Ladenburg in auction at the municipal sports hall. The total proceedings from the auction were then transferred by municipal officials to an account termed



Ladenburg
Market Square
in 1930s.

“Jewish Property” in the savings bank Stadtsparkasse Mannheim. The Jewish homes were initially seized by the Municipality, emptied and then in part rented out to non-Jewish Ladenburgers. The houses and plots of land still in Jewish ownership at the time of the deportation were initially not allowed to be offered for sale. After issuance from Berlin of the Eleventh Decree to the Reich Citizenship Law on November 25, 1941, the German Reich then expropriated these properties. ●

THE FORMER SYNAGOGUE | Kirchenstraße No. 45

Proceeding from Market Square we walk along Kirchenstraße. On the right side of the street is the half-timbered house at Kirchenstraße No. 45.

In this historical building, today a residential house, the Ladenburg Jews had conducted their religious services since the late 17th century. There was a mikvah (Jewish ritual bath) in the cellar of the building. In 1832 it was decided that this synagogue no longer sufficed for the needs of the then expanding Jewish Community. In the course of that same year, the Jewish Community sold at auction this long-utilized synagogue building in order to finance the construction of a new synagogue. Since the proceedings from the auction sale fell short of the amount envisioned by the Community members, the Community decided to sell an additional building on Färbergasse. An earlier request for financial support had been rejected by the Grand-Ducal Ministry of the Interior in Karlsruhe.

With the total proceeds from the two sales, the Jewish Community then purchased from its member Moritz Löwenthal a house located at Hauptstraße No. 46, and arranged to have it remodeled as suitable for a synagogue. On December 19, 1832 the Community celebrated religious services for the last time at Kirchenstraße No. 45, and several days later the ceremony for consecration of the new synagogue took place.



The former old synagogue in Ladenburg until 1832 – today a residential building

TEXTILE SHOP LAMMFROMM | Kirchenstraße No. 23

We continue to stroll on down Kirchenstraße. Likewise on the right side of the street is the half-timbered house at Kirchenstraße No. 23. On February 1, 1920, the merchant Maier Lammfromm and his wife Frieda, née Liebmann, took charge of the textile shop of their brother-in-law David Hirsch,



Building at
Kirchenstr.
No. 23 in
August 2010



a business established before World War One and located at Kirchenstraße No. 23. The couple had two children. While their son Herbert (born 1910) managed in the summer of 1938 to flee together with Alfred Driels to Australia, the fate of his sister Gertrude, one year his senior, is unknown. She probably was also a Holocaust victim.

Due to the constantly intensifying anti-Semitic persecution, Maier Lammfromm closed his firm in 1937 and sold the building in 1939 to a married couple in Ladenburg. Maier and Frieda Lammfromm were able to continue to live in the house at Kirchenstraße No. 23.

Maier Lammfromm was one of the eleven Jewish Ladenburgers who were deported on November 10, 1938 to the Dachau concentration camp. After an internment of five weeks, he was released and allowed to return on December 16, 1938 to Ladenburg. Maier Lammfromm passed away at the age of 64 on August 26, 1940 in Ladenburg, likely succumbing to the later consequences of confinement under harsh conditions in the Dachau concentration camp. He is buried in the Jewish Cemetery in Mannheim.

His widow Frieda, who stemmed from Birkenau, moved on October 1, 1940 from Ladenburg to Buttenwiesen, Maier Lammfromm's home town. She was deported from there on April 3, 1942 "to the East." Her subsequent fate is unknown. ●

TOBACCO FACTORY KAUFMANN & CO. | Kirchenstraße No. 10

We continue our stroll down Kirchenstraße in the direction of the Bischofshof. On the left side of the street is the house at No. 10

The Tobacco Factory Kaufmann & Co., an enterprise founded in the 19th century by Marx Kaufmann at Kirchenstraße No. 10, was taken over to be managed by his two sons Leo and Sally during World War One. A number of workers and office employees were working in the factory during the 1920s. Due to persecution, Leo and Sally Kaufmann closed down their business in 1936 but remained residing in the building.



Building at
Kirchenstraße
No. 10
in August 2010.

Their mother Mathilde Kaufmann, née Maier, operated a men's clothing store, located likewise at Kirchenstraße No. 10, together with her daughters Julie, Luise and Meta. In February 1940, Leo Kaufmann was one of the last Ladenburg Jews to succeed in emigrating to the United States. His siblings Sally, Julie, Luise and Meta, by contrast, were deported on October 22, 1940 together with their mother Mathilde Kaufmann from Ladenburg to Gurs. On December 8, 1940, Mathilde Kaufmann, born 1855 in Malsch, died as a result of the inhumane living conditions prevalent in the camp, the first deportee from Ladenburg to lose her life there. She was buried in the Gurs cemetery. Her daughters Julie and Meta as well as her son Sally were deported on August 10, 1942 from Gurs to Auschwitz. Luise Kaufmann suffered the same fate on August 17, 1942 and was, like her sisters and brother, murdered. In 1942 the German Reich confiscated the building belonging to Mathilde Kaufmann as well as two arable plots of land.



JEWISH SECTION IN THE

We now walk on directly ahead, passing the Sebastian Chapel, toward the Bischofshof (Bishops' Court), the former second official residence of the bishops of Worms. The Lobdengau Museum of the City of Ladenburg has been housed there since 1968. It developed from the earlier Museum of Local History located in the Renaissance House at No. 45 Kirchenstraße (today the Restaurant Sackpfeife).

Under the decades-long directorship of Dr. Berndmark Heukemes (Honorary Citizen of the City of Ladenburg, † 2009), the Museum was able to significantly expand its collections on the Roman and medieval history of



Photo of the wedding of Brunhilde and Max Kapustin in the Ladenburg synagogue in 1937 – one of the exhibits in the Jewish Section in the Lobdengau Museum in Ladenburg.

LOBDENGAU-MUSEUM | Bischofshof



1



2



3



4



5

- 1 Chanukkah candelabra – Chanukkah, the eight-day Jewish Festival of Lights
- 2 Menorah – the candlestick symbol of Judaism
- 3 Crown of the Torah (Keter Torah)
- 4 Merkbuch für jüdische Geschichte (Notebook on Jewish History) – written by Sally Rosenfelder, the longtime cantor and religious teacher of the Community
- 5 Shabbat candleholder

Ladenburg. The Jewish Section was opened in the Museum in March 2008. Among the exhibits on display there are, for example, the textbooks of the longtime cantor and religious teacher of the Jewish Community, Sally Rosenfelder, and photographs of former Jewish residents. The Jewish Section underscores that the Jewish Community, from its medieval beginnings until its violent end in 1940, was an important component of the city. ●

RESIDENCE OF THE HIRSCH FAMILY | Bahnhofstraße No. 22



Police
Headquarters
Ladenburg in
August 2010

From the Lobdengau Museum we proceed on leftward until Hauptstraße; we then turn left strolling down Hauptstraße to Bahnhofstraße. On the left side of the street is house No. 22, today the building housing the Ladenburg Police Headquarters.

Resident in this building until their deportation on October 22, 1940 were members of the Hirsch family. After on the morning

of November 10, 1938, the entire interior furnishings of the synagogue at Hauptstraße No. 46 had been destroyed, the Community members subsequently gathered together on Shabbat and the Jewish holidays in this house.

The merchant Fritz Hirsch, who stemmed from Groß-Gerau, had lived in Ladenburg since 1919; together with his brother-in-law Eugen Levy, he was director of the company Kaufmann Brothers at Hauptstraße No. 26 (see Station 10). Fritz Hirsch was married to Selma, née Kaufmann, a daughter of Julius II and Thekla Kaufmann. The couple Hirsch had seven children. Fritz Hirsch was one of the Orthodox members of the Ladenburg Jewish Community and was a member of the Supreme Council of Baden Israelites. The three oldest children, Rafael, Lilli and Esriel, were able in time to emigrate to Great Britain or Palestine. Their younger siblings Rachel, Jacob, Elias and Joel were deported together with their parents and grandmother Johanna Hirsch to Gurs. After an internment of several months, Johanna Hirsch was transferred from the Gurs camp to the Rivesaltes camp, where she shortly later passed away on March 18, 1941 at the age of 84.

Fritz Hirsch was sent together with his mother in March 1941 to the Rivesaltes internment camp and detained there until October 1942. After an extended detention in the Nexon camp, he was returned to internment in Gurs in February 1943. On March 4, 1943 Fritz Hirsch was deported to Majdanek concentration camp. There his further traces vanished. Fritz Hirsch

was declared dead. His wife Selma, under circumstances unknown, succeeded in escaping from the Gurs camp. She survived as the sole adult survivor from Ladenburg, in hiding in France, and emigrated after the war's end to Israel, where she died in 1956.

Like their mother, the four children – Rachel, Elias, Jacob and Joel Hirsch – were also able to flee from the Gurs camp. From the spring of 1941 on, various aid organizations, among them the Oeuvre de secours aux enfants (OSE), rescued numerous children of German Jews from the internment camps in southern France and hid them until the arrival of Allied troops in 1944, or made it possible for them to migrate from France. Jacob and Elias Hirsch were rescued from the Gurs camp at the beginning of 1941 and were subsequently brought to a children's home of the OSE. That same year, with the assistance of Quakers, Jacob Hirsch managed to flee to the United States. After 1948 he built a new life for himself in Israel. Elias Hirsch went in the reverse direction. After initially emigrating to Israel, he migrated from there to the United States.

Joel Hirsch was just one year old in October 1940 and thus the youngest deportee from Ladenburg. At the end of January 1941 he was placed in a children's home in Limoges and remained there until October 1944, before he returned to his mother in La Châtre. Joel Hirsch emigrated together with his mother and sister Rachel to Israel in 1948. In the summer of 1942, shortly before the deportation of the camp prisoners to Auschwitz, Rachel Hirsch succeeded in escaping from the Rivesaltes camp, to which she in the meantime had been transferred. After a stay for a time in a children's home of the aid organization OSE, Rachel Hirsch later fled to Switzerland, remaining there until after the war's end. Rachel Stanieski, née Hirsch, lived until her death in Jerusalem.

The house at Bahnhofstraße No. 22 (then Adolf-Hitler-Straße), whose lawful owner was recorded in the land registry as the deceased Julius Kaufmann II, was expropriated in 1943 and later became the seat of the Ladenburg Police. ●



HOUSE OF THE KEMPE FAMILY | Neugasse No. 5



Building at
Neugasse No. 5
in August 2010

Proceeding from Bahnhofstraße we return to Hauptstraße and turn right at Hotel Goldene Krone, walking down Brauergasse. At the intersection Brauergasse/Neugasse, on the left, stands the house at Neugasse No.5.

Until the end of the 1920s, this building housed the Adler Inn, which included a large hall. Every spring, the Jüdischer Verein ('Jewish Association'), founded in 1921 by the cantor Rosenfelder, organized there its special Purim celebration, in its form unique. It was very popular as a festival not only in the Ladenburg Community but also among members of the nearby surrounding Jewish Communities. The Purim festival commemorates the actions of Queen Esther, in the pre-Christian period in Persia, to rescue the Jews from the threat of destruction at the hand of the anti-Semitic viceroy Haman. Already from the beginning of the 20th century

onward, the Jewish Ladenburgers had gathered together every December to celebrate Chanukkah. These likewise very noteworthy and beloved celebrations were initially held in the hall of the Anker Restaurant, and later in hall at the Adler Inn, for the last time in 1937. The Adler Inn was shut down in 1929, and the new owner of the building was the firm Kaufmann Brothers.

In the same building lived the Kempe family. Erich Kempe was born in 1896 in Berlin and relocated from there to Ladenburg in 1919. From 1920 on he was employed as an accountant in the firm Kaufmann Brothers. His wife Betty, née Plaut, was born in 1894 in Ottrau in Hesse. She also moved, presumably after the end of World War One, coming to Ladenburg in order to find work. Ludwig Kempe, the only child of Erich and Betty Kempe, was born in Mannheim in 1922. In view of the ever intensifying persecution of



Married couple Erich and Betty Kempe, top row, third and fourth from the left, together with other Jewish Community members, ca. 1936

the Jews, from 1938 on Ludwig Kempe began his preparations to emigrate. In order to improve chances of finding employment abroad, he acquired skills in carpentry. His migration to Palestine, planned for November 1939, was postponed several times until August 1940. In November 1940, together with a larger group of Jewish youths and young adults, including the Ladenburger Esriel Hirsch, Ludwig Kempe was finally able to immigrate illegally to Palestine.

At this point in time, his parents had already been deported to Gurs. Erich and Betty Kempe remained in detention in this camp for almost 2 years and were deported on August 10, 1942 to Auschwitz. Their subsequent fate is unknown, both were declared dead after the war.



RESIDENCE OF THE RHEIN FAMILY | Neugasse No. 3



Building at
Neugasse No. 3
in December
2010..



We now walk down Neugasse toward Hauptstraße. On the right side of the street stands the house at Neugasse No. 3.

From 1879, the merchant Heinrich Sternweiler operated a men's and women's clothing store in this building. His daughter Bertha, born in 1877 in Ladenburg, took over direction of the business probably at the beginning of the 20th century and from then on offered manufactured goods as well as dry goods, woolen and linen goods. She was married to Max Rhein, an elementary school teacher who stemmed from Westphalia. Their son Herbert Rhein lived for a time in Ladenburg in the 1930s and later relocated to Hesse; his subsequent fate is unknown. Max Rhein died in 1937 in Ladenburg. His widow dissolved her firm sometime around 1938 and rented out the business premises to a druggist. Bertha Rhein continued to live in the building and was deported to Gurs on October 22, 1940. In January 1943 she was transferred to the Noé internment camp, and was taken from there in August 1943 to the Hospital Montauban, where she died on November 18, 1943. The building at Neugasse No. 3 was expropriated by the German Reich in 1941 and ultimately sold to a private purchaser. ●

RESIDENCE OF THE KAUFMANN FAMILY | Hauptstraße No. 27

Proceeding from Neugasse we turn right into Hauptstraße. On the left at the junction with Cronbergergasse stands the house at Hauptstraße No. 27.

The merchant Louis Kaufmann, born 1861 in Ladenburg, had since the turn of the century been the owner of a tobacco factory. His commercial premises were at Hauptstraße No. 27. Sometime between 1933 and 1935, Herr Kaufmann dissolved his one-man company, probably for reasons of advancing age, and moved in the autumn of 1936 if not before to Heidelberg. At the end of 1938, Louis Kaufmann sold the building to a Ladenburg shoemaker and his wife. Louis Kaufmann was deported on October 22, 1940 to Gurs and his subsequent fate is unknown.



Louis Kaufmann was married to Paulina, née Dreyfuss. The couple had three children. Kurt Sigmund was born in 1893 and moved already in 1911 from Ladenburg to Heidelberg. During World War Two, he was deported to the Mauthausen concentration camp, where shortly before the war's end he died. His brother Herbert Hugo, born in 1896, left Ladenburg before 1936 and relocated to his older brother in Heidelberg. Herbert Hugo Kaufmann was deported to Gurs on October 22, 1940 and later murdered. Erna, the youngest child of Louis and Paulina Kaufmann, was born in Ladenburg in 1898. She married the lawyer Dr. Fritz Klein in 1919 and moved with her husband from Ladenburg to Frankfurt/Main or Wiesbaden. Later on she lived for a time in Mannheim, and emigrated from there in 1937 to France. After the German forces occupied France, Erna Klein was deported, probably in 1942, to Auschwitz and murdered. ●

KAUFMANN BROTHERS | Hauptstraße No. 26

We turn now toward the house opposite, on the other side of the street, at Hauptstraße No. 26.

The widow Jeannette Kaufmann (1819–1904), stemming originally from Mannheim-Feudenheim, née Feist, established a textile firm in this building in 1854. At the end of the 19th century, her sons Julius II (1850–1934), Moses (1855–1930) and Abraham (1860–1904) took over the business and changed the company's name to Gebrüder Kaufmann (Kaufmann Brothers).

Julius Kaufmann II was among the outstanding personalities in the Jewish Community of Ladenburg. He was very involved with charitable activities and was for decades a member of the Synagogue Council and for a time also served as chair of this body. Julius Kaufmann and his wife Thekla (1857–1934) had six daughters: Frieda (1882–?), Zessie (1886–?), Ella (1890–1942), Lydia (1891–?), Selma (1894–1956) and Eugenie (1896–?).

Ella Kaufmann married Eugen Levy sometime around 1913, a businessman stemming from the Hunsrück. Ella Levy was active together with her husband in the company of her father, and in 1916 obtained the power of attorney for the firm. After the end of World War One, Ella Levy's younger sister Selma married the merchant Fritz Hirsch, who hailed from Groß-Gerau (see Station 6). Fritz Hirsch and his brother-in-law Eugen Levy had since the

1920s been owners of this department store for quality textile goods and furniture. The firm Gebrüder Kaufmann developed, at the latest in the Weimar Republic if not before, into the largest and presumably also most tradition-rich Jewish business in the city. Since the 1920s, Fritz Hirsch and Eugen Levy had regularly visited the surrounding Jewish Communities as

Members of the Kaufmann family in the 1920s. Julius Kaufmann II, front row, fourth from the right, Thekla Kaufmann, fifth from the right.



well, offering their wares for sale there. In 1933, the company, respected well beyond the boundaries of Ladenburg, had along with 11 Jewish employees also approximately 5 non-Jewish workers in its employ. After the beginning of National Socialist rule, the permanent clientele of the Gebrüder Kaufmann department store slowly began to decline.



Correspondingly, in the mid-1930s, the number of employees fell. The practice of customers starting in 1935 not to pay for the goods bought on credit was to prove disastrous for the firm. Due to its very high open counts receivable, the firm soon found itself no longer able to meet liabilities owed to its suppliers. The efforts undertaken in 1936/37 for that reason by Fritz Hirsch and Eugen Levy to sell the company to non-Jewish business persons proved unsuccessful. On January 4, 1938, insolvency proceedings had to be initiated regarding the assets of the department store in order to avoid bankruptcy. On July 12, 1938, under consultation with two Mannheim attorneys, the sale was concluded by the owners Ella Levy and Selma Hirsch of the residential and business premises of the firm, including the store's interior furnishings. These were sold to a married couple in Ladenburg who owned a dry goods shop situated on Market Square. The proceeds from the sale served in part to cover the debts and liabilities of the firm, and also made possible collaterally the emigration of several children in the Levy and Hirsch families. The new owner announced in a notice placed in the Neckar-Bergstraß-Post on August 26, 1938 that the Kaufmann Brothers firm was now in his possession and would be opened for business the following day by him anew. In actual fact, this had not been an "Aryanization" of Jewish property, because the firm of Kaufmann Brothers remained for the

Hauptstraße with a view to the Old Town Hall, beginning of the 20th century; front right the store of the Kaufmann Brothers.

time being in liquidation and still existed. Fritz Hirsch and his associate Erich Kempe then set about arranging the necessary settlement of the accounts of the long-established firm, doing so in the building at Neugasse No. 5 which likewise belonged to the company. After the deportation of the two men on October 22, 1940, a tax consultant in Mannheim took over that task.

Eugen Levy, born in 1887, and his wife Ella (three years his junior) had five children. Walter Levy, born 1914, was

trained like his father as a merchant and in August 1938 emigrated to Australia. Helmut Levy, born 1915, learned the trade of a baker and confectioner, and emigrated already in March 1938 from Frankfurt/Main to Palestine.

The twins Josef and Hanna Levy were born in 1920. Josef Levy learned, like his brother Helmut,



Levy family, end of the 1920s. Left to right: Helmut Levy, Walter Levy, Ella Levy, Lea Levy, Eugen Levy, Hanna Levy and Josef Levy.

the baker's profession and was able to emigrate to Great Britain in February 1939. He later emigrated after the Second World War to Israel. His twin sister succeeded in emigrating to Palestine in March 1939. Hanna Levy completed her training there as a nurse. Lea, the youngest of the Levy family children, born in 1926, emigrated at the end of July 1939 to Great Britain and after the war's end – with the support of her brother Walter – immigrated to Australia.

Eugen Levy died in August 1937 of a heart attack and was buried in the Jewish Cemetery in Ladenburg. His widow Ella Levy and her children, still living in Ladenburg, were allowed after the sale of the residential home and business premises to stay on until October 1, 1938, residing rent-free in the house at Hauptstraße No. 26. They lived after that with the Hirsch family at Bahnhofstraße No. 22. It is not known to what extent Ella Levy endeavored in 1939/40 – possibly with support from her children now living abroad – to leave Germany. After the outbreak of World War Two, emigration was virtually impossible.

Ella Levy and her sister Selma Hirsch belonged to the group of the last 27 Jewish Ladenburgers who were deported on October 22, 1940 to Gurs. After almost two years of detention in this internment camp, Ella Levy was transported on August 28, 1942 to Auschwitz, and was later murdered there at a time unknown. Selma Hirsch survived the war in France, the sole Jewish adult from Ladenburg to do so (see Station 6).

Her sister Zessi Kaufmann, later Saul, lived until 1910 in Ladenburg and repeatedly stayed after that for short periods in this old once-Roman town. She worked as a teacher in locations unknown. In April 1940, Zessi Saul moved from Ladenburg to Neu-Isenburg or Frankfurt/Main. From there she was later deported to Lodz and her subsequent fate is unknown.

Eugenie Kaufmann lived for a time in Mannheim and Hörden/Harz and returned to Ladenburg 1921, staying on until 1923. She did not learn any trade or profession and became engaged in 1925 to the school inspector Louis Rosenblatt from Cologne. Later Eugenie Kaufmann moved to Bad Dürkheim. Her subsequent fate is unknown, as is that of her older sister Frieda.

Lydia Kaufmann was a nurse and relocated in 1919 to Berlin. She married Kurt Wormser and lived initially with her husband and two sons Elnö (born 1929) and Miro (born 1931) in Frankfurt/Main. From 1934 to 1938, the family lived in the house at Hauptstraße No. 26, before they returned to Frankfurt/Main and later emigrated from there to Palestine. ●



RESIDENCE OF THE DRIELS FAMILY | Hauptstraße No. 36/38



We now walk down Hauptstraße heading toward Market Square. On the right side of the street stand the houses at Hauptstraße No. 36/38.

Abraham and Mina Rubel established a textile shop at the end of the 19th century at Hauptstraße No. 47. The couple had five children: Sigmund, Max, Albert, Flora and Rosa.



Adolf Driels, a merchant who stemmed from Groß-Karben in Hesse, moved at the end of 1912 to Ladenburg, marrying Flora Rubel a short time later. He then entered the firm of his parents-in-law. After Abraham Rubel died in 1914, Mina Rubel continued to run the business in tandem with her daughters Flora and Rosa.

The merchant Moritz Driels, the younger brother of Adolf Driels, married Rosa, the second daughter of Abraham and Mina Rubel, around 1917/18. After returning from the First World War, he likewise entered the firm that his parents-in-law had founded. In 1918, the Driels brothers proceeded to take over management of the business together with their wives, which henceforth operated

Above: The Moritz Driels family in the 1930s.
Below: The houses at Hauptstraße No. 36/38 in August 2010.

under the name A. & M. Driels OHG. In the summer of 1925, the enterprise was relocated to Hauptstraße No. 36/38, after Adolf and Moritz Driels had purchased the building. In the 1920s, A. & M. Driels OHG had two workers on staff and later hired another employee.

Adolf and Moritz Driels maintained the firm's business operations despite all the ongoing discrimination they faced until the November 1938 pogrom. Since from January 1939 it was prohibited for Jews to operate a

business independently, A. & M. Driels OHG was forced in December 1938 to shut down.

The two brothers sold the business property in June 1939 to a Ladenburg watchmaker and his wife. However, despite the property having been sold, Adolf, Moritz and Rosa Driels were permitted to continue living in the building. They had already sold the property at Hauptstraße No. 47 in December 1938 to a Ladenburg greengrocer and his wife.



Adolf and Flora Driels had two children: Herta, born in 1913, and Alfred, born in 1916. Herta Driels emigrated in 1937 to Great Britain. Her younger brother Alfred was able in 1938 to immigrate to Australia. Flora Driels died in 1932, aged 49, from a serious illness and was buried in the local Jewish Cemetery.

Her sister Rosa and her brother-in-law Moritz had three children: Else, born 1919, Margot, born 1921, and Helmut, born 1923. Else Driels immigrated to Holland at the end of 1936. She was deported from there in 1942 to Auschwitz and her subsequent fate is unknown. At the beginning of 1939, her siblings Margot and Helmut relocated to Great Britain in the framework of the so-called Kindertransporte.

Efforts by Alfred Driels to obtain Australian entry permits for his father, aunt and uncle failed because the war broke out on September 1, 1939. Rosa, Moritz and Adolf Driels were deported on October 22, 1940 to Gurs, and on August 10, 1940 were transported from there to Auschwitz. ●

FORMER SYNAGOGUE | Hauptstraße No. 46

The synagogue is the center of religious and social life of every Jewish Community. Non-Jews sometimes referred to the synagogue as 'Schule,' or "Jewish school" ('Judenschule'). After religious services were held for the last



Above: Cantor Rosenfelder with pupils, ca. 1933.
Below: 25th anniversary of service of Cantor Rosenfelder, July 1935.

time on December 19, 1832 in the previous synagogue at Kirchenstraße No. 45, the Community consecrated its new synagogue, with ritual bath (mikvah), a Community hall and an apartment for a teacher and cantor, at Hauptstraße No. 46. The synagogue was located at the rear of the lot and was discernible from the street side only by its high lancet windows. As customary in most Jewish Communities and their congregations, during religious services men and women of the Ladenburg Community sat separated. While men prayed on the ground floor, the women followed the services and prayer from an upper gallery. The front building housed the ritual bath, the teacher's apartment and cantor's residence. Community members entered the synagogue via this front building. From the synagogue one could pass into an adjoining small room in which various smaller-scale Community events were held, as well as for time classes in Jewish religious instruction.

The Jewish Community in Ladenburg had since the mid-19th century found itself caught up in the religious disputes between the poles of the Reform movement and Jewish Orthodoxy. While on one hand it displayed the characteristic features of a traditionally pious Jewish rural Community in southwestern Germany, as a result of the Jewish Communities in the neighboring cities of Mannheim and Heidelberg, it was exposed as well to a Reform-oriented, 'Liberal' influence. From the end of the 19th century onward, the Ladenburg Jewish Community was likely more marked by the presence of Orthodox Jews, since they came regularly to participate in the

religious services. However, into the 1930s, the majority of the Community members were evidently persons with a more Liberal view of Judaism, who attended the religious services at the synagogue less frequently than the adherents of Orthodoxy.

Toward the end of the Weimar Republic, the Ladenburg Jewish Community celebrated the 100th anniversary of its synagogue in December 1932. The local paper Neckar-Bergstraß-Post carried an extended article on December 31, 1932 on this event. The article once more stressed the esteem that the Ladenburg Jewish Community enjoyed amongst the Jewish population in Baden: "The Jewish Community of our old small once Roman town can proudly say of itself that among the small Jewish Communities in Baden, it occupies a position of honor." In addition, the article emphasized the continuing peaceful and amicable relations with the non-Jewish Ladenburgers. The tense economic and political situation at that juncture cast its shadow on the arrangements for the anniversary, so that the festivities were kept modest.

Until November 1938, there were two religious services daily in the Ladenburg synagogue, and on Shabbat and the Jewish holidays three religious services were held. Utilizing court records, it is possible to reconstruct the events that transpired during the night of the Reich Pogrom November 9/10, 1938 in Ladenburg. At the beginning of 1949, there were two trials in the Mannheim District Court involving the crime of disturbing the peace charged against 12 defendants who had been participants in the pogrom events in Ladenburg. Nine of the accused were ultimately sentenced to prison terms ranging between five months and one year, nine months. In Ladenburg, as in numerous other localities, the destruction of the synagogue constituted the dark prelude to the violence against Jewish citizens and their private possessions that ensued. On

Photo of the former synagogue in Ladenburg, its high lancet windows visible, 1963.



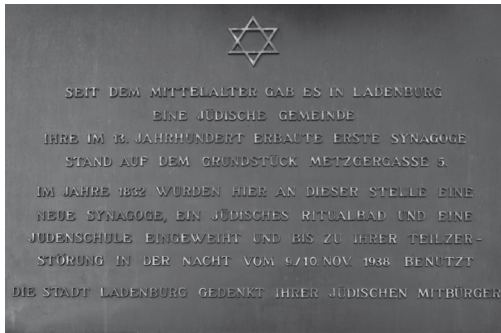
the morning of November 10, 1938, around 6 a.m., a number of SS members under the command of SS-Untersturmführer Karl Schöpferle gathered in front of the synagogue and forced their way into the premises. After they had partially destroyed the interior furnishings, the SS men intended to set the synagogue on fire. In the meanwhile, a quite sizeable crowd had gathered out in front of the synagogue; several passers-by also participated in ransacking and acts of destruction. After several nearby residents had vehemently warned about the dangers for the neighboring houses should the

intended arson go ahead, the SS men abandoned their plan. They then went to the shops, businesses and residences of the Jewish Ladenburgers, where they continued their violent acts of destruction. Members of the SA also participated.

The commandant of the Sturmabteilung in Ladenburg, SA-Hauptsturmführer Reffert, received an order from the SA unit in Mannheim around 7:30 a.m. to totally

demolish the synagogue. When Reffert arrived at the synagogue around 8 a.m., SA men had just started to destroy the roof. Meanwhile a very large crowd had congregated out in front of the synagogue. The SA-Hauptsturmführer ordered his subordinates to drill boreholes for explosives in order to blow up the synagogue, and he himself assisted with this. But several nearby residents succeeded in convincing Reffert of the associated dangers for the neighboring buildings that would ensue if they pressed ahead with such a detonation to blow up the synagogue. After that the SA unit commander, together with other participants, hurled broken bricks at the benches inside the synagogue. From there Reffert and other SA members forced their entry into the cantor's apartment, destroying it completely.

Cantor Rosenfelder's family was thrown out of the apartment and sought refuge in the home of the Driels family. SA-Hauptsturmführer Reffert also gave an order to arrest all the Jews in their respective residences and to escort them to the Town Hall. There the SA men arrested 11 Jewish men, aged between 32 and 62, placing them in so-called "protective custody." They were then transported via Mannheim to the Dachau concentration



The memorial plaque installed in 1976 in remembrance of the former Jewish citizens of Ladenburg, photo August 2010.

camp. After spending several weeks in detention – by then in a serious physical and mental condition – the men were released in the period December 6–28, 1938, and allowed to return to Ladenburg. The violent destruction subsequently subsided on the afternoon of November 10, 1938. According to testimony by Cantor Rosenfelder, his former apartment was plundered on several following nights. On instructions from the Ladenburg municipality, municipal workers were given the job of hauling furniture from the Jewish homes and apartments to the municipal sports hall. This removal operation went on for ca. eight days after November 10, 1938. During the week December 4–12, 1938, auctions of Jewish possessions were held in Ladenburg; these took place in the residences of a number of Jewish families and also in part in the municipal sports hall. Several of the auctioned items of furniture were bought by four of the men who were later charged in 1949 of disturbing the peace.

Alongside these wrongful acts of behavior by some Ladenburgers, actions even then deemed illegal, there were also examples of fellow feeling and humanity on that day. Several courageous neighbors helped the Jewish Ladenburgers after their residences had been ravaged and plundered, bringing them food and items of everyday use urgently needed.

Since the interior furnishings of the Ladenburg synagogue had been totally destroyed on November 10, 1938, the Community sold the synagogue and residential house of the Rosenfelder family on February 17, 1939 to a Ladenburg master mason and his wife.

Sally Rosenfelder was born in 1882 in Aidhausen in Lower Franconia, the son of the cantor and religious teacher Joel Rosenfelder. He completed studies at the Jewish Teachers' Training Institute in Würzburg, working then initially in Buchen in Baden, and took up his appointed post in Ladenburg on July 1, 1910. Like his predecessors in Ladenburg, he served not only as cantor and teacher but also as shochet (kosher ritual slaughterer), as well as Community secretary, Community and foundation accountant, and administrator of the funds box for the migrant poor; he was also the accountant and secretary of the Jewish Men's Patient Association. In addition, Rosenfelder was also active in pastoral matters and assisted in taking care of the library of the Jewish Community established in the 1920s and in administration of the Jewish Cemetery.

He was especially concerned about the religious and cultural education of the Ladenburg Jews. In March 1921, he founded the Jüdischer Verein (Jewish Association), whose stated aim was "promotion of Jewish knowledge and the cultivation of noble conviviality." As head and organizer of the association, which around 1924/25 already boasted some 40 members,

Rosenfelder had responsibility for its events, such as lectures on topics in Judaism and recreational excursions (see also Station 7). In the years 1925–1934, with assistance from his wife Minna, he self-published a series of textbooks for instruction on Jewish religion and history, some volumes appearing in several editions.

Sally Rosenfelder was an avowed patriot and up until November 10, 1938 had been steadfastly resolute not to leave Ladenburg. When he was arrested on that day, he asked his wife Mina and daughter Irene to take steps to obtain the necessary papers for immigration to the United States. The cantor was successful in arranging emigration together with his wife in July 1939 to Great Britain, and the couple traveled on from there in the summer of 1940 to the US. Sally Rosenfelder passed away in 1969 in New York. His daughter Irene Rosenfelder had already emigrated to the US in April 1939. Minna Rosenfelder's mother, Klara Schwarzenberger, born in 1868, was likewise able to flee to Great Britain in August 1939. She was the last Community member to succeed in that attempt to emigrate. In the summer of 1940, she then went on together with her daughter Mina and her son-in-law Sally to the United States. They were assisted in their immigration to the United States by Brunhilde Kapustin (1912–1973), née Rosenfelder, and her husband Dr. Max Kapustin (1910–1984), who had already emigrated to the US. They had been living since the end of 1937 in Virginia. Rabbi Dr. Max Kapustin had found a position with the Jewish Community at the Aetz Chayim Synagogue in Danville/VA.

The new owner of the building at Hauptstraße No. 46 had the former synagogue reconverted in 1954 into a storage hall. Externally, only the high lancet windows served as reminders that this had once been a place of worship. In the course of a renewed renovation in 1967, the lancet windows finally vanished, and the previous storage hall was remodeled into a residential apartment. For nine years, until November 9, 1976, there was nothing on the spot that served as a reminder of the former Ladenburg synagogue. On the 38th anniversary of the November pogrom, the City of Ladenburg, in the presence of the then Baden State Rabbi Levinson, mounted a memorial plaque in bronze: "A Jewish Community existed in Ladenburg since the Middle Ages. Their first synagogue, built in the 13th century, stood upon the plot of land at Metzergasse No. 5. In the year 1832, here at this place, a new synagogue, a Jewish ritual bath and a Jewish school were consecrated. These were in service and utilized until their partial destruction in the night of November 9/10, 1938. The City of Ladenburg commemorates its Jewish fellow citizens."

RESIDENCE OF THE KRELL AND LÖWENFELS FAMILIES | Weinheimer Straße No. 20

We remain on Hauptstraße and proceed on to its eastern endpoint. Then at the pedestrian stoplight we cross Weinheimer Straße and walk on to the left until the house at Weinheimer Straße No. 20.

Anna Kapustin, born 1907, was the older sister of Rabbi Dr. Max Kapustin. At the beginning of 1931, she married Alfred Krell, a Polish Jew (born 1897) and lived with him for many years in Sinsheim.

Together with their two daughters Lea (1932–2008) and Ruth (born 1933) the couple moved at the beginning of January 1939 to Ladenburg and lived in the house at Weinheimer Straße No. 20. In the spring of 1940, Alfred Krell sought to arrange emigration with his family from Germany. Due to the lack of certain necessary papers required for exiting Germany, the Krell family failed in its attempt to flee abroad. On October 22, 1940 Alfred, Anna, Lea and Ruth Krell were deported from Ladenburg to Gurs. Lea and Ruth Krell were rescued from the Gurs camp in 1941 by the aid organization OEuve de secours aux enfants (OSE) and placed in a children's home. After that they lived for a time with French farmers near Lyon and remained to the war's end in an orphanage of the OSE. Lea and Ruth Krell emigrated together in September 1946 to the US to join their grandfather Jakob Kapustin. He had managed to immigrate to the US in the spring of 1940. After internment of almost two years in Gurs, Alfred and Anna Krell were deported on September 9, 1942 to Auschwitz and murdered there. Heinrich Löwenfels stemmed from Windsheim in Franconia and had come in 1927 at the age of 26 to Ladenburg. He worked until 1938 as a salesman in the firm Gebrüder Kaufmann. Recha Gutmann was born in 1912 in Hainsfurth



House at
Weinheimer
Straße No. 20
in December
2010..



Anna Krell with her two daughters Lea (right) and Ruth (left) on a stroll at the Ladenburg Bleiche, a grassy area along the old city wall, ca. 1936.

liberated from there through the aid of the OSE. Ernst Löwenfels spent the following years hidden in the children's homes Pou-louzat (Condat-sur-Vienne) and Château de Chabannes (Sainte-Pierre-de-Fursac). In October 1946 he emigrated to the United States and adopted the name of Ernest Lowenfels. ●

in Bavaria and relocated from there in 1935 to Ladenburg, marrying Heinrich Löwenfels soon thereafter. The couple lived together with their son Ernst, born 1938, likewise in the house at Weinheimer Straße No. 20. For reasons unknown, Heinrich Löwenfels did not wish to follow his siblings, who had already immigrated to the United States. On October 22, 1940 the family was deported to Gurs. After a five-month detention in Gurs, Heinrich Löwenfels was transferred to the Rivesaltes internment camp. He was deported on August 26, 1942 to Auschwitz and later murdered there. Unlike her husband, Recha Löwenfels remained in Gurs and was deported on August 24, 1942 to Auschwitz, where she was also murdered. Ernst Löwenfels was sent together with his father in March 1941 to the Rivesaltes camp. Shortly thereafter, he was



RESIDENCE OF MESDAMES STRAUSS | Wormser Straße No. 18

We reverse our tracks at the house Weinheimer Straße No. 20, going back in the direction of Neue Anlage. Then we walk along Neue Anlage until we reach Wormser Straße near the Martin Gate. We turn right down Wormser Straße and proceed to house No. 18. While the last cantor and religious teacher Sally Rosenfelder was able at the time of his emigration to look back on 29 years of extended activity in Ladenburg, his predecessor Hermann Strauß was only a short time in Ladenburg (1909/1910). The teacher Hermann Strauß, born 1874 Eppertshausen in Hesse, came to Ladenburg in November 1909 as the successor of Max Schiff. Hermann Strauß lived with his wife Gella (born 1879 in Billigheim in Baden) at Hauptstraße No. 46. Only a few months after assuming his new post, he passed away in the first



half of 1910, and was buried in the Jewish Cemetery. His widow Gella relocated with her sister-in-law Regina Strauß to the house at Wormser Straße No. 18. Gella Strauß was active in the Ladenburg Jewish Community, and in 1923 established the Jewish Women's Association (Jüdischer Frauenverein).

Regina Strauß, born 1872 in Eppertshausen, had come with her brother and her sister-in-law Gella to Ladenburg in 1909. Sara Strauß, born 1858 in Eppertshausen, the older sister of Hermann and Regina, also came probably at a later point to stay at the house on Wormser Straße. Mesdames Strauß had, perhaps since about 1910, been offering a kosher noon meal for the Orthodox Community members who were single. Among them were, for example, several Jewish employees of the firm Gebrüder Kaufmann. As a consequence of the continuous emigration, above all of younger unmarried males from 1933 on, the number of persons who took advantage of the kosher meal offered by Sara, Regina and Gella Strauß declined. It was impossible to determine precisely when the three women finally ceased this

Kosher noon meal at the home of the Strauß ladies (standing to the rear), ca. 1935.

kosher meal service arrangement. Sara and Regina Strauß remained until May 1940 in Ladenburg and later lived in Frankfurt/Main. Their sister-in-law Gella had likewise moved to Frankfurt/Main in May 1940; it is possible that she had already been living in Frankfurt since November 1939. Regina Strauß was deported on August 18, 1942, aged 70, from Frankfurt to the Theresienstadt concentration camp. Her subsequent fate is unknown. That is also the case for the fate of her sister Sara and her sister-in-law Gella Strauß. It was impossible to establish the precise date of their deportations. ●



RESIDENCE OF THE LÖWENSTEIN FAMILY | Schwarzkreuzstraße No. 2

We proceed on down Wormser Straße toward the Cemetery and then turn right into Schwarzkreuzstraße. On the right side stands the building No. 2. Salomon Löwenstein was born in 1878 in Fischelbach in Hesse and came to Ladenburg in 1908 with his first wife Johanna. The couple had two sons: Julius, born in 1909, and Albert, born in 1920. Salomon Löwenstein was a master shoemaker and operated a shoe store, in the beginning at Heidelberger Straße No. 6, and then at Schwarzkreuzstraße No. 2 until November 1938.

After divorcing his first wife in 1925, Löwenstein married that same year Emilie Heumann, who stemmed from Hofenheim in Baden. Soon after the forced closure of his shop, the paths of the couple separated. While Emilie Löwenstein relocated to Heidelberg in December 1938, Salomon Löwenstein remained until September 1939 in Ladenburg, before he then relocated to Mannheim. In the “city of squares,” Mannheim’s nickname, Löwenstein built up his own “training workshop for Jewish emigrants.” Emilie and Salomon Löwenstein were deported on October 22, 1940 to Gurs from their respective cities of residence. Emilie Löwenstein remained in detention there until March 1941, when she was transferred to the Rivesaltes internment camp. On September 11, 1942 Emilie Löwenstein was deported to Auschwitz and was murdered there, the date unknown. Salomon Löwenstein, just like his wife, was also transferred in March 1941 to Rivesaltes. After internment of more than a year in Rivesaltes, he was brought in April 1942 to a hospital in Perpignan. Salomon Löwenstein managed to survive the war in France; nothing more is known about under what conditions and how. At the beginning of 1947, he immigrated to the United States. He was supported there by his younger son Albert, who had been able to emigrate a few weeks before the November 1938 Pogrom to the United States. The fate of Albert’s older brother Julius could not be determined. That is also true in the case of Salomon Löwenstein’s first wife. All that is known regarding Johanna Löwenstein is that she relocated in April 1938 to Heidelberg. Further trace of her is lost there.



JEWISH CEMETERY | Preysingstraße No.16

We walk back a few steps from the house at Schwarzkreuzstraße No. 2 to the pedestrian crossing and then cross Schwarzkreuzstraße. Then we go on to the right proceeding to Preysingstraße, into which we turn left. We walk along this street, after some 350 m reaching on the left side of the street the first entrance to the Ladenburg Cemetery. We enter and go down the pathway. After walking some 75 m, we arrive at the entrance to the Jewish Cemetery. The Jewish Community Ladenburg did not have a place of burial of its own until

the mid-19th century. Community members who died were probably buried from the Middle Ages until into the 17th century in the Jewish Cemetery in Worms, since the city of Ladenburg belonged to the sphere of sovereignty and authority of the Worms bishops. Due to the



Jewish
Cemetery
Ladenburg,
photo,
August 2010.

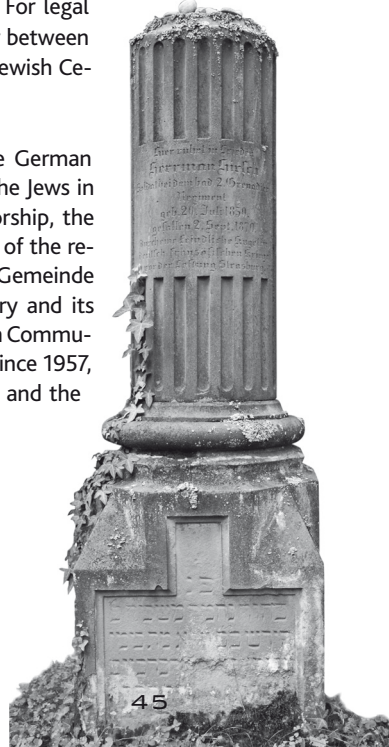
great distance (25 km) from Worms, from 1674 on the Jewish Ladenburgers buried their dead in the newly arranged Jewish Cemetery in Hemsbach, a distance of 18 km from Ladenburg. In order to guarantee its maintenance, several Jewish Communities, including Ladenburg, created a Burial Society. Because of the growing number of Community members and the problems associated with transporting the deceased to Hemsbach, the Ladenburg Community in the mid-19th century endeavored to obtain its own plot of land nearby for the purpose of establishing a cemetery. After these efforts led in 1848 to success and a suitable plot of land was acquired east of the Christian cemetery, the first burial of a deceased Jewish Ladenburger, the 80-year-old Veitel Kahn, took place in Ladenburg on May 16, 1848. By 1880 if not earlier, the Community erected a small building at the north-west corner of the cemetery in which the Community-owned hearse was stored. It could not be established

for how long this building existed and under what circumstances it was torn down. In accordance with the statutes of the Jewish Cemetery Federation of July 12, 1880, only members of the Jewish Community in Ladenburg were to be buried in the cemetery. The cemetery served in the following decades as the final resting place for at least 96 further Community members. The final funeral at the Jewish Cemetery took place but a few days before the November 1938 Pogrom. Berta Kapustin had passed away on November 3, 1938. In contrast with Christian cemeteries, the Jewish deceased and their graves should traditionally rest forever undisturbed. A transfer of land ownership by conveyance of Jewish cemeteries is thus not permitted in the Jewish religion, nor is the repeated occupancy of the same gravesite.

It is impossible to determine whether the Jewish Cemetery in Ladenburg was desecrated on November 10, 1938. Yet there is evidence that in the years between the November Pogrom and the end of the Nazi dictatorship, individual gravestones were overturned and thus defiled. For legal reasons, repeated attempts by the Ladenburg Municipality between June 1941 and March 1944 to acquire and then level the Jewish Cemetery proved abortive.

In 1942 the Jewish Cemetery was confiscated by the German Reich and initially passed on to the Reich Association of the Jews in Germany. After the end of the National Socialist dictatorship, the closed Jewish cemeteries became once again the property of the respective Jewish Community. If a Jewish Community qua Gemeinde was not formally reestablished in a locality, the cemetery and its grounds belong to the respective state association of Jewish Communities – in Baden he Supreme Council of Baden Israelites. Since 1957, based on an agreement between the federal government and the

Left to right:
gravestone of
Berta Kapustin,
the last Jew to
be buried in the
Jewish Cemetery
in Ladenburg;
gravestone of
Hermann Strauß,
cantor 1909–1910;
tombstone of
Herrmann Hirsch,
killed in
combat 1870.





regional German states, the respective municipality is responsible for the maintenance and care of the Jewish cemeteries.

In order to preserve the remembrance of the names of the murdered Jewish Ladenburgers, the members of the “Working Group Jewish History” in Ladenburg raised the demand starting in 1993/94 for the erection of a memorial in front of the Jewish Cemetery. Thanks to support from the Ladenburg Municipality and numerous donations by the citizens of Ladenburg and by political parties, it was possible on May 7, 1995 to formally dedicate a memorial in stone bearing the names of the total of 49 former members of the Jewish Community Ladenburg who perished in the Holocaust. The inscription on the memorial, created by the Ladenburg master stone mason Ulrich Werner and designed by the Ilvesheim-based artist Detlev Kleineidam, reads:

“We mourn for the Jewish men, women and children from Ladenburg, who in the years between 1933 and 1945 were, in the German name, persecuted, deported and murdered, and who found no grave.

ת.ג.צ.נ.ת

May their souls / also live on in /
the land of Eternity / in the Community /
of all the Good and Noble”

It is customary in Judaism to put these letters at the bottom of a monument or gravestone. These letters are an acronym for the ancient Hebrew words t'hay nafsho/ah tzrurah b'tzror hachaim): “May his/her soul be bound up in the bond of life.” From the Cemetery we proceed on down Preysingstraße and Rheingaustraße back to our point of departure at Market Square to conclude the tour. ●

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Stadt Ladenburg:

p. 2

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p. 17–19, 21 (illus. 4), 22–24, 25 (below), 26, 27, 31, 32 (below),
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Traces of Jewish Life in Ladenburg – A Tour

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Translator's Afterword

The German term 'Gemeinde' has been rendered here as 'Community' capitalized, to distinguish it from the German 'Gemeinschaft,' a 'community' in a general broader sense of a group of people bonded together, but not a legal body. The German 'Gemeinde' in the sense used here in this booklet is a "body in public law" (KdöR), an incorporated religious body, what German law terms a 'Kultusgemeinde,' with formal membership of individual Jews, normally embracing Jews solely in a specific locality. It can also be rendered in American and British English in some texts as 'congregation,' in the sense of single synagogue and its members. But a Gemeinde in Germany can encompass Jews in a larger locality who worship at a number of different synagogues with their separate congregations in the city. Gemeinde is also translated as 'parish,' and even 'municipality' or 'township,' an administrative unit of local German government, depending on contextual meaning. The older, largely antiquated terms 'Israeliten,' 'israelitisch' in German legal discourse have been rendered here as 'Jews' and adjectivally as 'Jewish,' except in the name of the still existing body known as the Supreme Council of Baden Israelites (Obererrat der Israeliten Badens).



Autobahn A5
und L. 597

Autobahn A5
und L. 597

P
BUS

H
Bahnhof
Polizei

WC

H

Neckarfähre
Schwimmbad
Römerstadion

16

15
14

13

9
8
10
7

11
1

2

3

6

I
Dr. Carl-Benz-
Platz

5

4

P

P

P

P

P

P

Schwarzkreuzstraße

Jahnstraße

Wallstädter Straße

Neckarstraße

Neckarstraße

Neckarstraße

Neckarstraße

Neckarstraße

Neckarstraße

Neckarstraße

Neckarstraße

Keitenweg

Luisenstraße

Neue Anlage

Färbergasse

Cronberggasse

Markt-
platz

Hauptstraße

Realschulstraße

Realschulstraße

Realschulstraße

Trajanstraße

Trajanstraße

Weinheimer Straße

Weinheimer Straße

Weinheimer Straße

Weinheimer Straße

Weinheimer Straße

Weinheimer Straße

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Weinheimer Straße

Weinheimer Straße

Weinheimer Straße



Stations of the Tour

- 1 DEPORTATION ON OCTOBER 22, 1940, Market Square
- 2 FORMER SYNAGOGUE, Kirchenstraße No. 45
- 3 TEXTILE SHOP LAMMFROMM, Kirchenstraße No. 23
- 4 TOBACCO FACTORY KAUFMANN & CO., Kirchenstraße No. 10
- 5 THE JEWISH SECTION IN THE LOBDENGAU©MUSEUM, Bischofshof
- 6 RESIDENCE OF THE HIRSCH FAMILY, Bahnhofstraße No. 22
- 7 HOUSE OF THE KEMPE FAMILY, Neugasse No. 5
- 8 RESIDENCE OF THE RHEIN FAMILY, Neugasse No. 3
- 9 RESIDENCE OF THE KAUFMANN FAMILY, Hauptstraße No. 27
- 10 KAUFMANN BROTHERS, Hauptstraße No. 26
- 11 RESIDENCE OF THE DRIELS FAMILY, Hauptstraße No. 36/38
- 12 FORMER SYNAGOGUE, Hauptstraße No. 46
- 13 RESIDENCE OF THE KRELL AND LÖWENFELS FAMILIES, Weinheimer Straße No. 20
- 14 RESIDENCE OF MESDAMES STRAUSS, Wormser Straße No. 18
- 15 RESIDENCE OF THE LÖWENSTEIN FAMILY, Schwarzkreuzstraße No. 2
- 16 JEWISH CEMETERY, Preysingstraße No. 16

CHRONOLOGY OF THE HISTORY OF JEWISH LIFE IN LADENBURG

- 1291 First documented mention of the Jews in Ladenburg ('Moyses von Luttenburgk' as a contract witness)
- 1700 A synagogue is located at Kirchenstraße No. 47 (until 1832)
- 1832 Dedication of the new synagogue at Hauptstraße No. 46, with mikvah (ritual bath), community hall and teacher's apartment
- 1848 First burial in the Jewish Cemetery in Ladenburg
- 1853 The number of members of the Jewish Community reaches 153, its peak
- 1862 Jews granted full civil equality in Baden
- 1900 There are 105 Jewish men, women and children living in Ladenburg
- 1910 Sally Rosenfelder becomes cantor and religious teacher of the Jewish Community (until 1939)
- 1914 Theodor Hauser is the first soldier from Ladenburg killed in action in World War One
- 1933 Ladenburg has a population of 5,111, including 88 Jewish men, women and children
- 1933 On March 29 and April 1 the National Socialists organize a boycott of Jewish businesses
- 1938 On November 10, SS- and SA men destroy the interior furnishings of the synagogue and deport 11 Jewish men to the Dachau concentration camp
- 1940 On October 22, the National Socialists deport the final remaining 27 Jewish men, women and children to Gurs in France; only eight of them survive the Holocaust
- 1967 In June the synagogue is remodeled into a residential house
- 1976 A memorial plaque is mounted at the former synagogue
- 1990 14 former Jewish citizens pay a visit to Ladenburg at the invitation of the city
- 1995 Dedication of a memorial stone in memory of the murdered Jewish Community members
- 2008 Opening of the Jewish Section in the Lobdengau Museum

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A Jewish community existed in Ladenburg from the 13th century until October 22, 1940. Its members contributed in multifarious ways to the development of the town. As in most localities within Germany, after the end of World War Two no member of the Jewish religious Community returned to resettle in Ladenburg. Nonetheless, the traces of former Jewish life continue to be present in various forms up to the present, as the tour described in this booklet with its 16 stations makes clear.

Along with the Jewish Cemetery, the Jewish Section in the Lobdengau Museum and the former synagogue, the booklet presents biographies of former Jewish citizens. Their individual fate is recalled today by 37 'stumbling blocks' which the Cologne-based artist Gunter Demnig installed in the pavement between 2007 and 2011. The booklet is rounded out by a short overview on the history of Jewish life in Ladenburg.

In a visit to Ladenburg, Gunter Demnig commented: "A human being is only forgotten if their name is forgotten." In this sense, you are cordially invited to seek out and discover the traces of Jewish life in Ladenburg.

